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Release No.13-06-18

June 18, 2013

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Uniformed Services University alumnus among NASA's new astronaut class

Bethesda, MD — NASA officials announced their newest class of astronaut candidates and Army Maj. (Dr.) Andrew Morgan, 37, a Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU) graduate is among the select group of trainees.

Morgan, a USU class of 2002, was among the 8 military and civilian astronaut candidates selected by NASA officials for their 2013 class. He was selected from more than 6,100 applicants -- a process that took more than a year and a half.

Morgan, whose previous experience includes serving as an emergency physician and flight surgeon for the Army special operations community, is currently finishing a sports medicine fellowship.

"We are thrilled, but not surprised, that one of our graduates has been chosen on the basis of his past achievements and future promise," said USU President Charles L. Rice, M.D. "We are very proud of Drew's selection as a NASA astronaut candidate."

Morgan will report to Johnson Space Center in Houston in August with his fellow astronaut-trainees and will receive a wide array of technical training at space centers around the globe to prepare for missions to low-Earth orbit, an asteroid and Mars.

"These new space explorers asked to join NASA because they know we're doing big, bold things here -- developing missions to go farther into space than ever before," said NASA Administrator Charles Bolden. "They're excited about the science we're doing on the International Space Station and our plan to launch from U.S. soil to there on spacecraft built by American companies. And they're ready to help lead the first human mission to an asteroid and then on to Mars."

In addition to Morgan, the new astronaut candidates are:

Josh A. Cassada, Ph. D., 39, is originally from White Bear Lake, Minn. Cassada is a former naval aviator who holds an undergraduate degree from Albion College, and advanced degrees from the University of Rochester, N.Y. Cassada is a physicist by training and currently is serving as co-founder and Chief Technology Officer for Quantum Opus.

Victor J. Glover, 37, Lt. Commander, U.S. Navy, hails from Pomona, Calif., and Prosper, Texas. He is an F/A-18 pilot and graduate of the U.S. Air Force Test Pilot School. Glover holds degrees from California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, Calif.; Air University and Naval Postgraduate School. He currently is serving as a Navy Legislative Fellow in the U.S. Congress.

Learning to Care for Those in Harm's Way

Tyler N. Hague (Nick), 37, Lt. Colonel, U.S. Air Force, calls Hoxie, Kan., home. He is a graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and the U.S. Air Force Test Pilot School, Edwards, Calif. Hague currently is supporting the Department of Defense as Deputy Chief of the Joint Improvised Explosive Device Defeat Organization.

Christina M. Hammock, 34, calls Jacksonville, N.C. home. Hammock holds undergraduate and graduate degrees from North Carolina State University, Raleigh, N.C. She currently is serving as National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Station Chief in American Samoa.

Nicole Aunapu Mann, 35, Major, U.S. Marine Corps, originally is from Penngrove, Calif. She is a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, Stanford (Calif.) University and the U.S. Naval Test Pilot School, Patuxent River, Md. Mann is an F/A 18 pilot, currently serving as an Integrated Product Team Lead at the U.S. Naval Air Station, Patuxent River.

Anne C. McClain, 34, Major, U.S. Army, lists her hometown as Spokane, Wash. She is a graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, N.Y.; the University of Bath and the University of Bristol, both in the United Kingdom. McClain is an OH-58 helicopter pilot, and a recent graduate of U.S. Naval Test Pilot School at Naval Air Station, Patuxent River.

Jessica U. Meir, Ph.D., 35 is from Caribou, Maine. She is a graduate of Brown University, has an advanced degree from the International Space University, and earned her doctorate from Scripps Institution of Oceanography. Meir currently is an Assistant Professor of Anesthesia at Harvard Medical School, Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston.

About USU

The Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, founded by an act of Congress in 1972, is the nation's federal health sciences university and the academic heart of the Military Health System. USU students are primarily active duty uniformed officers in the Army, Navy, Air Force and Public Health Service who have received specialized education in tropical and infectious diseases, TBI and PTSD, disaster response and humanitarian assistance, global health, and acute trauma care. A large percentage of the university's more than 5,000 physician and 1,000 advanced practice nursing alumni are supporting operations around the world, offering their leadership and expertise. USU also has graduate programs in biomedical sciences and public health, most open to civilian and military applicants, and oral biology, committed to excellence in research. The University's research program covers a wide range of clinical and other topics important to both the military and public health. For more information about USU and its programs, visit www.usuhs.edu.